NUMB. CLXXXVI.

The SPECTATOR.

Cœlum ipſum petimus ſtultitia —— Hor.

Wedneſday, October 3. 1711.

UPon my Return to my Lodgings laſt Night, I found a Letter from my worthy Friend the Clergy-man, whom I have given ſome Account of in my former Papers. He tells me in it that he was particularly pleaſed with the latter Part of my Yeſterday's Speculation; and at the ſame Time encloſed the following Eſſay, which he deſires me to publiſh as the Sequel of that Diſcourſe. It conſiſts partly of uncommon Reflections, and partly of ſuch as have been already uſed, but now ſet in a ſtronger Light.

'A Believer may be excuſed by the moſt hardened Atheiſt for endeavouring to make him a Convert, becauſe he does it with an Eye to both their Intereſts. The Atheiſt is inexcuſable who tries to gain over a Believer, becauſe he does not propoſe the doing himſelf or Believer any Good by ſuch a Converſion.

'The Proſpect of a future State is the ſecret Comfort and Refreſhment of my Soul; it is that which makes Nature look gay about me; it doubles all my Pleaſures, and ſupports me under all my Afflictions. I can look at Diſappointments and Misfortunes, Pain and Sickneſs, Death it ſelf, and, what is worſe than Death, the Loſs of thoſe who are deareſt to me, with Indifference, ſo long as I keep in view the Pleaſures of Eternity, and the State of Being in which there will be no Fears nor Apprehenſions, Pains nor Sorrows, Sickneſs nor Separation. Why will any Man be ſo impertinently officious, as to tell me all this is only Fancy and Deluſion? Is there any Merit in being the Meſſenger of ill News? If it is a Dream let me enjoy it, ſince it makes me both the happier and better Man.

'I muſt confeſs I do not know how to truſt a Man that believes neither Heaven nor Hell, or in other Words, a future State of Rewards and Puniſhments. Not only natural Self-love, but Reaſon directs us, to promote our own Intereſt above all things. It can never be for the Intereſt of a Believer to do me a Miſchief, becauſe he is ſure upon the Ballance of Accompts to find himſelf a Loſer by it. On the contrary, if he conſiders his own Welfare in his Behaviour towards me, it will lead him to do me all the Good he can, and at the ſame Time reſtrain him from doing me an Injury. An Unbeliever does not act like a reaſonable Creature, if he favours me contrary to his preſent Intereſt, or does not diſtreſs me when it turns to his preſent Advantage. Honour and Good-nature may indeed tie up his Hands; but as theſe would be very much ſtrengthened by Reaſon and Principle, ſo without them they are only Inſtincts, or wavering unſettled Notions that reſt on no Foundation.

'Infidelity has been attack'd with ſo good Succeſs of late Years, that it is driven out of all its Outworks. The Atheiſt has not found his Poſt tenable, and is therefore retired into Deiſm, and a Disbelief of revealed Religion only. But the Truth of it is, the greateſt Number of this Set of Men, are thoſe who for want of a virtuous Education, or examining the Grounds of Religion, know ſo very little of the Matter in queſtion, that their Infidelity is but another Term for their Ignorance.

'As Folly and Inconſiderateneſs are the Foundations of Infidelity, the great Pillars and Supports of it are either a Vanity of appearing wiſer than the reſt of Mankind, or an Oſtentation of Courage in deſpiſing the Terrours of another World, which have ſo great an Influence on what they call weaker Minds; or an Averſion to a Belief that muſt cut them off from many of thoſe Pleaſures they propoſe to themſelves, and fill them with Remorſe for many of thoſe they have already taſted.

'The great receiv'd Articles of the Chriſtian Religion, have been ſo clearly proved from the Authority of that Divine Revelation in which they are delivered, that it is impoſſible for thoſe who have Ears to hear and Eyes to ſee, not to be convinced of them. But were it poſſible for any thing in the Chriſtian Faith to be erroneous, I can find no ill Conſequences in adhering to it. The great Points of the Incarnation and Suffer-

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‘ings of our Saviour, produce naturally ſuch Habits
‘of Virtue in the Mind of Man, that, I ſay, ſup-
‘poſing it were poſſible for us to be miſtaken in
‘them, the Infidel himſelf muſt at leaſt allow that
‘no other Syſtem of Religion could ſo effectually
‘contribute to the heightening of Morality. They
‘give us great Ideas of the Dignity of humane Na-
‘ture, and of the Love that the ſupreme Being
‘bears to his Creatures, and conſequently engage
‘us in the higheſt Acts of Duty towards our Crea-
‘tor, our Neighbour, and our ſelves. How many
‘noble Arguments has Saint *Paul* raiſed from the
‘chief Articles of our Religion, for the advancing
‘of Morality in its three great Branches? To give
‘a ſingle Example in each Kind: What can be a
‘ſtronger Motive to a firm Truſt and Reliance on the
‘Mercies of our Maker, than the giving us his Son
‘to ſuffer for us? What can make us love and e-
‘ſteem even the moſt inconſiderable of Mankind,
‘more than the Thought that Chriſt died for him?
‘Or what diſpoſe us to ſet a ſtricter Guard upon
‘the Purity of our own Hearts, than our being
‘Members of Chriſt, and a Part of the Society of
‘which that immaculate Perſon is the Head? But
‘theſe are only a Specimen of thoſe admirable En-
‘forcements of Morality which the Apoſtle has
‘drawn from the Hiſtory of our bleſſed Saviour.

‘If our modern Infidels conſidered theſe Matters
‘with that Candour and Serioufneſs which they de-
‘ſerve, we ſhould not ſee them act with ſuch a
‘Spirit of Bitterneſs, Arrogance, and Malice:
‘They would not be raiſing ſuch inſignificant Cavils,
‘Doubts, and Scruples, as may be ſtarted againſt
‘every thing that is not capable of mathematical
‘Demonſtration; in order to unſettle the Minds of
‘the Ignorant, diſturb the publick Peace, ſubvert
‘Morality, and throw all things into Confuſion and
‘Diſorder. If none of theſe Reflections can have
‘any Influence on them, there is one that perhaps
‘may; becauſe it is adapted to their Vanity, by
‘which they ſeem to be guided much more than
‘their Reaſon. I would therefore have them
‘conſider that the wiſeſt and beſt of Men in
‘all Ages of the World, have been thoſe who
‘lived up to the Religion of their Country, when
‘they ſaw nothing in it oppoſite to Morality, and
‘the beſt Lights they had of the divine Nature.
‘*Pythagoras*'s firſt Rule directs us to worſhip the
‘Gods *as it is ordained by Law*, for that is the
‘moſt natural Interpretation of the Precept. *Socra-*
‘*tes*, who was the moſt renowned among the Hea-
‘thens both for Wiſdom and Virtue, in his laſt
‘Moments deſires his Friends to offer a Cock to
‘*Æſculapius*; doubtleſs out of a ſubmiſſive Defe-
‘rence to the eſtabliſhed Worſhip of his Country.
‘*Xenophon* tells us, that his Prince (whom he ſets
‘forth as a Pattern of Perfection) when he found
‘his Death approaching, offered Sacrifices on the
‘Mountains to the *Perſian Jupiter* and the Sun, *ac-*
‘*cording to the Cuſtom of the Perſians*; for thoſe
‘are the Words of the Hiſtorian. Nay, the *Epi-*
‘*cureans* and Atomical Philoſophers ſhewed a very
‘remarkable Modeſty in this Particular; for though
‘the Being of a God was entirely repugnant to
‘their Schemes of natural Philoſophy, they con-
‘tented themſelves with the Denial of a Provi-
‘dence, aſſerting at the ſame Time the Exiſtence
‘of Gods in general; becauſe they would not
‘ſhock the common Belief of Mankind, and the
‘Religion of their Country.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

By Her Majeſty's Company of Comedians.

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, To Morrow, being the 4th of October, will be preſented a Comedy call'd, Love makes a Man, or the Fop's Fortune. The Part of Don Lewis, alias Teſty, by Mr. Penkethman, Carlos by Mr. Wilks, Clodio, alias Dilma', by Mr. Cibber, Don Antonio by Mr. Bullock, Don Duart by Mr. Errington, Sancho by Mr. Norris, Angelina by Mrs. Bradſhaw, Donna Louiſa by Mrs. Rogers, Donna Tereſia by Mrs Porter.

All Gentlemen that want Silk Morning Gowns are deſir'd to go to the Sign of the Hood and Scarf over-against the Coffee-houſe in Cornhill, where they will find to their Satisfaction all ſorts of Silk Gowns in greater Variety and at cheaper Rates than any Shop in Town can pretend to ſell them, they being bought at Sales, and of People that have fail'd. Note, The Ladies may likewiſe be fitted with all ſorts of quilted and hoop'd Petticoats, made by the D. of Montague's Mantua-maker.

EDWARD EVANS at the 4 Coffins over-against Summerſet-Houſe in the Strand, having diſpoſ'd of all his old Stock of Goods to the NEW COMPANY at the lower-end of the Hay-Market, hath bought in a new Stock; where any Perſon of Quality or others may be furniſhed with all Things neceſſary for Funerals and ſet Mourning, as uſual, TWO SHILLINGS in the POUND cheaper then by any other.

Wines to be ſold by Retail.

To Morrow next, the 4th Inſtant, will be ſold excellent Red and White Port, and Red and White Liſbon, being neat Wines as they came from the Grape, of the beſt Growth in Portugal. To be ſold by the Importer in a Vault in Brabant-Court, Philpot-Lane, viz. Red and White Port at 5s. per Gallon, or 14l. per Hhd. Red and White Liſbon at 5s. 6d. per Gallon, or 16l. per Hhd. Attendance will be given every Day.

The extraordinary choice Collection (of the late Streeter, late Serjeant Painter) conſiſting of Models, Figures, and antick Heads in Plaiſter; as alſo Bronzes beneficial for the Study of Painters, Carvers, and Statuaries, or adorning the Libraries of the Nobility and Learned, will be ſold by Auction on the 5th inſtant at 3 in the Afternoon, at his late Dwelling-houſe next Bolton-Row in Hide-Park Road; and may be ſeen by all Lovers of Art the Day and to Morrow. Conditions of Sale as uſual. Note, An excellent Collection of fine Pictures, Italian Prints, and Drawings will ſuddenly be expos'd to Sale, and ſhall be advertis'd.

Playing-Cards of all Sorts.

Being a Collection of the choiceſt and moſt valuable Goods, made by the beſt Makers before the late Impoſition of 6 d. a Pack; to be ſold at reaſonable Rates, by wholeſale or retail, at a Warehouſe at the Upper-end of Ironmonger-lane next Cheapſide, with an Allowance to all thoſe that take a Quantity. N. B. To prevent Abuſes, a Table of the Prices will be ſet up in the Warehouſe, and Attendance given from 8 to 11 in the Forenoon, and from 2 to 5 in the Afternoon.

Conſumptions of all ſorts radically Cured, by a famous Elixir peculiarly invented for that Diſeaſe; its wonderful Efficacy ſufficiently explodes the Erroneous Opinion, that Conſumptions are Incurable, ſince it abſolutely retrieves the Patient, though reduc'd to a meer Skeleton; quickly takes off all the Symptoms, as Cough, Hoarſneſs, Wheezing, Shortneſs of Breath, Pain or Weight in the Breaſt, Spitting of Blood, ſoreneſs of the Stomach, Throat or Wind-pipe; alſo Catarrhs or Defluxions of ſharp Rhume, and all Pthiſical and Aſthmatick Affects, Hectick Feaver, &c. perfectly cures all internal Ulcers, reſtores all inward Waſtings, Weakneſs and decay of Nature, being Balſamic and Strengthning beyond Compariſon; it aſſiſts and cures the firſt Principle, or cauſe of Conſumptions, rectifying the Diſorders of Stomach and firſt Paſſages, creating an Appetite, procuring a good Digeſtion, reducing the vicious Ferment of the Blood and Juices, correcting the Acrid Salts that erode the Lungs, certainly healing Ulcers therein, and infallibly curing all ſorts of Conſumptions, tho' never ſo bad, in a very ſhort time to a Miracle. Price 3 s. 6 d. a Bottle with Directions. Sold only at Mr. Osborn's Toyſhop at the Roſe and Crown under St. Dunſtan's Church, in Fleetſtreet.

Juſt publiſh'd,

Maps of the World, Aſia, and South America, engraved by J. Senex, which compleat a Set of 20 Maps, viz. the World, Quarters, and principal Diviſions of Europe, each on two Sheets of Imperial Paper. Sold by J. Senex and J. Maxwell at the Globe in Salisbury-Court, Fleet-ſtreet, Mr. Mount on Tower-hill, Mr. Hyde behind the Royal-Exchange, Mr. King in the Poultry, Mr. Lyon againſt Exeter-Change in the Strand, and by Mr. Greaves in St. James's-ſtreet.

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